



UNIVERSITY OF
ALBERTA

COMM 193/ALES 204

INTRODUCTION TO SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

In Winter 2014, COMM 193, *Introduction to Scientific and Technical Communication*, is being offered at Yukon College concurrent with the University of Alberta's ALES 204, *Communication Theory and Practice*, as part of the B.Sc. in Environmental and Conservation Sciences Program. All students registered in COMM 193 or ALES 204 must adhere to requirements outlined in this course syllabus. Yukon College students must be aware of, and adhere to, Yukon College's Academic Regulations, referenced in the outline; University of Alberta students must also be aware of, and adhere to, the University's Code of Student Behaviour, also referenced in the outline.

INSTRUCTOR:	DR. KATHRYN AITKEN
	Instructor, School of Science, Yukon College
	Adjunct Professor, Dept. of Renewable Resources, University of Alberta
OFFICE HOURS:	Thursdays, 12:00-2:00 pm (or by appointment)
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DAYS & TIMES:

Lecture	Both sections	Mondays, 9:00-10:30 am	A2204
Computer Lab	Section 001	Tuesdays 2:30-4:00 pm	A2702
	Section 002	Thursdays, 2:30-4:00pm	A2702

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course covers the principles of scientific and technical communication. Students will learn how to read and write a scientific paper; how to conduct literature searches; how to prepare a scientific talk; how to prepare a research poster; and other applications of various styles of professional reporting in natural resource conservation and management. In addition, the ethical issues related to scientific communication and scientific integrity will be discussed.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND COMPETENCIES:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Use appropriate scientific style to write papers, technical reports, research posters, briefing notes, proposals, and other forms of professional communication in natural resource conservation and management;
2. Communicate scientific research and concepts to audiences ranging from experts to the general public;

3. Understand the concept of peer-reviewed scientific literature, obtain journal articles using electronic databases, and compile a literature review.

DELIVERY METHODS/FORMAT (3-0-0):

Depending on the material to be covered, some weeks the course consists of one 1.5-hour lecture and one 1.5-hour computer lab per week, or two 1.5-hour lectures.

Audio or video recording of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as part of an approved accommodation plan. Recorded material is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the instructor.

COURSE PREREQUISITES:

Admission requirements:

For students taking the course as COMM 193: Registration in the Yukon College Renewable Resources Management Diploma program. Successful completion of YC ENGL 100 or equivalent is strongly recommended.

For students taking the course as ALES 204: Registration in Yukon College/University of Alberta B.Sc. in Environmental and Conservation Sciences degree program, and permission of an ENCS Program Advisor. Successful completion of YC ENGL 100 or equivalent is strongly recommended.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS/MATERIALS:

No textbooks required.

Optional (these are great resources):

McMillan, Victoria E. 2012. *Writing Papers in the Biological Sciences*, 5th ed. Bedford/St. Martin's, Boston. ISBN-13: 978-0-312-64971-5. Available for download as an e-book from:

<http://www.coursesmart.com/9780312649715>

Pechenik, Jan A. 2012. *A Short Guide to Writing About Biology*, 8th ed. Addison Wesley. ISBN-13: 978-0205075072. Available for download as an e-book from:

<http://www.coursesmart.com/978-0205075072>

All students should have a valid Yukon College library account and/or University of Alberta library account. Yukon College library accounts are provided free to full-time and part-time students; YC students should present their YC student ID at the library to register for YC library privileges. U of Alberta library accounts are provided free to full-time and part-time students in the B.Sc. ENCS program. For more information on obtaining a U of Alberta library account and accessing resources off-campus, please visit <http://www.library.ualberta.ca/>.

All students must have a valid Yukon College student computer account. Students should ensure that they have activated their computer lab account AND MyYC account prior to the start of classes. For more information, visit: http://www.yukoncollege.yk.ca/student_info/pages/computing_services.

COURSE WEBSITE:

PowerPoint presentations, computer lab exercises, homework assignments, and other resources will be available on the MyYC class site.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS/EVALUATION:**Assignments**

Students will complete a variety of in-class exercises and out-of-class assignments designed to synthesize key course concepts. The assignments and writing exercises will focus on practicing and refining skills discussed during lectures. Examples of some assignments include:

- 1) An annotated bibliography on a topic in ecology, geology, environmental sciences, natural resources conservation and management, or mineral resources;
- 2) An introduction to a review paper on the topic selected for the bibliography;
- 3) A 12-minute conference-style PowerPoint presentation (PowerPoint files will be submitted for evaluation, rather than presented orally); and
- 4) A research poster.

Most exercises may be completed during computer lab time; however, the annotated bibliography, introduction to a review paper, and research poster will be completed outside of class time.

Students must adhere to the citation style used by the Council of Science Editors in all written assignments (http://www.yukoncollege.yk.ca/library/pages/cite_your_sources).

Assignments and exercises must be submitted (unless otherwise specified) electronically via the class site on MyYC.

Exams

There will be one exam worth 30% of the total course grade. The exam will be held during the Yukon College exam period in April. Details of exam content will be discussed in class prior to the exam date.

Students taking the course as ALES 204 must ensure that they are familiar with the University of Alberta's Academic Regulations governing missed and deferred final exams (<http://www.registrar.ualberta.ca/calendar/Regulations-and-Information/Academic-Regulation/23.5.html#23.5>).

Evaluation

The course grade will be determined as follows:

Assignment	Percent
In-class assignments/exercises	40%
Annotated bibliography	10%
Review paper introduction	10%
Research poster	10%
Final exam (date TBD; during YC exam period)	30%
Total	100%

Due dates

In-class exercises are due at the end of the computer lab period. Late in-class exercises will lose 5% of their mark per day that they are late, and WILL NOT be accepted after the next lab period (i.e., one week after they were due).

Out-of-class assignments are due (unless otherwise specified) by 11:59 pm PST on the date that they are due. Late assignments will lose 5% of their mark per day that they are late.

Please refer to the course schedule for specific due dates.

Assignment of grades

The total numerical score will be converted to a grade on Yukon College's letter grading system (for students enrolled in COMM 193), or on University of Alberta's letter grading system (for students enrolled in ALES 204).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

For students taking the course as COMM 193:

YUKON COLLEGE ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS:

- Yukon College students are expected to be familiar with academic standards and regulations as outlined in Yukon College's Academic Regulations, at http://www.yukoncollege.yk.ca/downloads/Academic_Regulations_2004.pdf.
- **PLAGIARISM:** Plagiarism involves representing the words of someone else as your own, without citing the source from which the material is taken. If the words of others are directly quoted or paraphrased, they must be documented according to standard procedures. The resubmission of a paper for which you have previously received credit is considered a form of plagiarism. Plagiarism is academic dishonesty, a serious academic offence, and will result in you receiving a mark of zero (F) on the assignment or the course. In certain cases, it can also result in dismissal from the College. Do not underestimate the impact such a situation will have on your reputation.

For students taking the course as ALES 204:

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND CODE OF STUDENT BEHAVIOUR:

- The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students must be familiar with standards regarding academic honesty and uphold policies of the University. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.
- All students at the University of Alberta are subject to the Code of Student Behaviour, as outlined in the 2013/2014 University Calendar. The most recent version of the Code of Student Behaviour can be found online on the University of Alberta web site. Students should speak with the course instructor about any questions or concerns about the code. Students should be particularly aware of the code as it pertains to internet and library research, use of previous class notes, reclamation plans of former students, and interviews or discussions with others. Students should familiarize themselves with the current version of the code and ensure they do not participate in any inappropriate behaviour as defined by it. Key components of the code specific to this course include the following statements:
 - **PLAGIARISM:** no student shall submit the words, ideas, images or data of another person as the student's own in any academic writing, essay, thesis, project, assignment, presentation or poster in a course or program of study.
 - **CHEATING:** no student shall represent another's substantial editorial or compositional assistance on an assignment as the student's own work.

PROFESSIONALISM AND CLASSROOM RULES OF ENGAGEMENT:

Students are expected to attend all lectures and labs, be engaged and courteous in all course activities, and to be on time for class. Please do not use cellular phones during class. Laptops are permitted for note taking and in-class work; however, please do not use laptops in class for non-class-related activities. While in computer labs, students are expected to refrain from using the computers to engage in non-class-related activities (e.g. Facebook, etc.).

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES OR CHRONIC CONDITIONS:

Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability or chronic condition. It is the student's responsibility to seek these accommodations. If a student has a disability or chronic condition and may need accommodation to fully participate in this class, he/she should contact the Learning Assistance Centre (LAC) at (867) 668-8785 or lassist@yukoncollege.yk.ca.

TENTATIVE TOPIC SCHEDULE:

Week	Topic
1 (Jan 6-10)	Course overview Introduction to scientific communication
2 (Jan 13-17)	Scientific literature – what is it? Citing your sources Guest presentation on YC Writing Centre resources (tentative)
3 (Jan 20-24)	Components of a scientific paper Style of scientific writing Annotated Bibliography due
4 (Jan 27-31)	Paragraphs and sentences
5 (Feb 3-7)	Word choice, punctuation, etc.
6 (Feb 10-14)	Writing the introduction
7 (Feb 17-21)	Graphs and tables Introduction due
8 (Feb 23-27)	Writing the methods & results
9 (Mar 3-7)	Writing the discussion
10 (Mar 10-14)	Abstracts
11 (Mar 17-21)	READING WEEK – no classes
12 (Mar 24-28)	Research presentations Guest presentation on Yukon Research Centre (Tanis Davey) - Tentative
13 (Mar 31-Apr 4)	Research posters
14 (Apr 7-11)	Course review Posters due